



United States
Department of
Agriculture

Forest
Service

Red Rock
Ranger District

P. O. Box 20429
Sedona, AZ 86341
Phone: (928) 282-4119
Fax: (928) 203-7539

File Code: 2350

Date: May 2, 2014

Dear Interested Citizen,

I am asking for your comments on non-motorized trail proposals for the Red Rock Ranger District. In 2013, the Red Rock Ranger District held public meetings to discuss potential non-motorized trail developments in the vicinity of Sedona, the Village of Oak Creek, Camp Verde, Rimrock and Cornville. The Red Rock District is now gathering broader public comment regarding specific trail and trailhead projects.

I seek your comments now to help narrow the planning focus and to determine which projects take priority. Your comments are most helpful if provided by June 15th. I would like to hear your thoughts on the merits and priority of the specific projects. I will decide which projects to take forward for design and analysis consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act and based on public comments, user safety, resource protection, Forest Plan direction, and funding. All, some, or none of these proposals may be taken forward for further planning depending on the criteria stated above.

You may submit comments directly to jmburns@fs.fed.us or on the Coconino National Forest website at: <http://www.fs.usda.gov/contactus/coconino/about-forest/contactus> or mail your comments to me, District Ranger Nicole Branton, PO 20429, Sedona, AZ 86341 or fax comments to the District office at 928-203-7539, attention Jennifer. Unless otherwise requested, all comments and names will be available as part of the public record.

A list of the specific projects is attached; they are broken into three sections. Section A lists trail connection and enhancement concepts for the Sedona/VOC area. Section B lists trail connection and enhancement concepts for the Camp Verde, Rimrock and Cornville areas. Section C lists proposed trailhead improvements. A series of maps identifying the general locations of the projects is also attached.

Thank you for your interest in the Red Rock Ranger District.

Sincerely,

NICOLE BRANTON
District Ranger

Attachments: maps



Section A: Trail Connections and Enhancement Projects – Sedona/VOC Area

1. Bell Rock Pathway Singletrack Bypass

This proposal would improve the tread and alignment of the existing bypass and add a southern segment to link to Bell Rock Vista. The existing bypass was originally developed as an equestrian bypass to protect the Bell Rock Pathway from horse damage. This bypass turned out to be unnecessary for horses since horse use on the Bell Rock Pathway is minimal. However, the increasing bicycle use of the Bell Rock Pathway is leading to user conflicts. A bicycle bypass would provide an alternative route for cyclists to travel on a trail off the congested Bell Rock Pathway.

Priority: High

2. Bell Rock and Courthouse Butte Connector

Under this proposal, the numerous use-created trails in this vicinity would be consolidated into one route which would connect the Bell Rock Pathway with the Courthouse Butte Loop through the saddle between these two features. The impacts to soils and vegetation would be reduced by identifying one route and restoring the others with native vegetation. The trail experience would be enhanced by having a signed and maintained route.

Priority: High

3. Upper Red Rock Loop Road Area Connectors

Under this proposal, trails would link the High School area with Red Rock Loop Road and the Old Post Trail. It may include the adoption of portions of an existing user-created loop (a.k.a Special Ed) around the feature known as the Pyramid. Sustainable portions of the loop may be retained, while other sections are rerouted to reduce resource damage. Alignment would consolidate current residential trail use, enhance soil protection and promote use away from sensitive areas in the vicinity.

Priority: High

4. Crescent Moon Connector

This proposal would adopt and improve a user-created trail which connects the Crescent Moon Picnic Area to Oak Creek at what is known as “Buddha Beach.” This route is used by hundreds of visitors who access Oak Creek each year. Creating a sustainable trail in this area would reduce erosion into Oak Creek.

Priority: High

5. Turkey Creek Connector

This proposal would consolidate various user-created routes into a single sustainable route to connect the trailhead on Verde Valley School Road to the official Turkey Creek Trailhead. This would provide an official trail off of the Turkey Creek Road, improving safety and experience and reducing resource damage.

Priority: High

6. Airport Loop Trail Connector

This proposal includes a short link to connect the Airport Loop trail to the Upper Airport Vista on the north side of the Vista. This would enhance the utility of the larger vista to function as a public trailhead.

Priority: High

7. Arizona Cypress Connectors

This proposal would connect the Arizona Cypress Trail near FR 9589 to the Mescal Trailhead parking on Long Canyon Road by building a connector that parallels Long Canyon Road. This would facilitate the use of loop trails in the upper Dry Creek area and improve safety by moving trail users off the road. The preference for this connector is to place it on the north side of Long Canyon Road, thereby minimizing sedimentation impacts to Dry Creek.

Priority: Moderate

8. Trail network west of Cultural Park

The proposal includes a sustainable trail network in this area for all three trail users (hikers, bikers and equestrians). The network would connect Cockscomb Trail to Girdner Trail. Numerous user-created routes (aka Western Civilization, Ledge n' Aerie, and Last Frontier) exist in this scenic area and are popular with trail users. Long segments would require re-routing for sustainability. Development of an official trail network may spread biker use away from more crowded areas into an area that has fewer resource issues. Some parts of the user-created routes may be used where they are sustainable, and other sections would be rerouted to reduce resource damage.

Priority: Moderate

9. Doe Mesa Rim Loop Trail

This proposal would be an extension of the existing Doe Mountain Trail and follow the scenic rim of Doe Mesa. This would consolidate the user-created trails on top of Doe Mesa, improve the experience for trail users and reduce resource damage. (no map)

Priority: Moderate

10. Verde Valley School Road Hiline Connector

This proposal would connect Verde Valley School Road to SR179 and connect with Hiline Trail. An existing user-created route is known locally as the Transept Trail, which is a poorly located user-created route linking Hiline Trail south to Verde Valley School Road and then around to the east to connect with Made in the Shade Trail. This route has been created through repetitive use on a predominantly unsustainable alignment on the west side of what is called Transept Mesa. An ad hoc trailhead has formed over the years at a wide spot on the Verde Valley School Road where it enters National Forest. This route would allow for the circumnavigation of Transept and for additional official trail access from the Village of Oak Creek.

Priority: Low to Moderate

11. Soldiers Wash Connector

This project would be an east-west trail connector in Soldiers Wash, located on an old 4x4 track to enhance loop options.

Priority: Low

12. Devil's Bridge Connector

This proposal would create a trail segment for a shorter route to get hikers from the Dry Creek Vista parking lot to Devil's Bridge without using the road or much of the Chuckwagon Trail. In the past, before Forest Road 152 became so rough, visitors could drive to the Devil's Bridge Trailhead. Now most park at the new Dry Creek Vista or Mescal trailhead and walk to the Devil's Bridge Trail via the Chuckwagon Trail. Many are unprepared for the long hike and some get lost. A more direct trail route, located off the road, could provide for a more pleasant experience. This area has sensitive soils and archaeology, and poses a challenge to sustainable trail building.

Priority: low

13. Old Post Reroute and Carroll Canyon Connectors

This proposal would involve rerouting the steepest northern portions of Old Post to be farther from the private property boundary. This would improve the quality of the trail for recreation and improve privacy for residential properties. It would also reduce erosion by relocating parts of the trail to more stable soils. In addition a short trail connection would be provided between Old Post and the City of Sedona Pump Station at the end of Camino Del Caballo Road. Another connector would be created to provide a more moderate alignment to the Ridge Trail.

Priority: Low

Section B: Trail Connection and Enhancement Concepts – Rimrock, Cornville and Camp Verde areas

1. Rimrock Loop Trails - Rimrock

This proposal would form a loop trail and connectors with FR 9202Y and local public streets for a non-motorized trail experience. This forest area is used by local residents who desire designated forest trails that can be signed and maintained.

Priority: High

2. Windmill Park connector - Cornville

This proposed trail would link Cornville's Windmill Park to a parcel of National Forest land located on the east side of Oak Creek and create a short loop trail on the mesa. Cornville residents seek trail access to and within this isolated parcel of National Forest. This development could include a pedestrian bridge, adjacent to the Cornville Road Bridge, for crossing of Oak Creek.

Priority: High

3. Jackson Flat Trail – Camp Verde

This proposal would create a connector trail on National Forest land between Camp Verde High School and Montezuma Castle National Monument. The trail would follow along Wet Beaver Creek. There could be parking and access at two locations: in the vicinity of the Camp Verde High School and on the Castle Road. The trail would be for ~~non-motorized use including equestrian, hiking and biking. It would link in with trails~~ that continue to Black Bridge on the south and to the Monument on the north.

Priority: Moderate

Section C: Proposed Trailhead Improvements

1. Mescal Trailhead

Under this proposal a new trailhead would be constructed within the old gravel pit located on Long Canyon Road to accommodate trail use in the upper Dry Creek area. Trail connectors would be constructed, linking to Mescal, Long Canyon and Arizona Cypress trails. We would then close and restore the current parking area at Mescal Trailhead on the east side of Long Canyon Road and at Long Canyon Trailhead on West side of Long Canyon Road. This trailhead consolidation would provide more parking where needed and lessen sedimentation impacts to the adjacent Dry Creek. Priority: High

2. Mystic Trailhead

There are two general concepts that we may consider under this proposal.

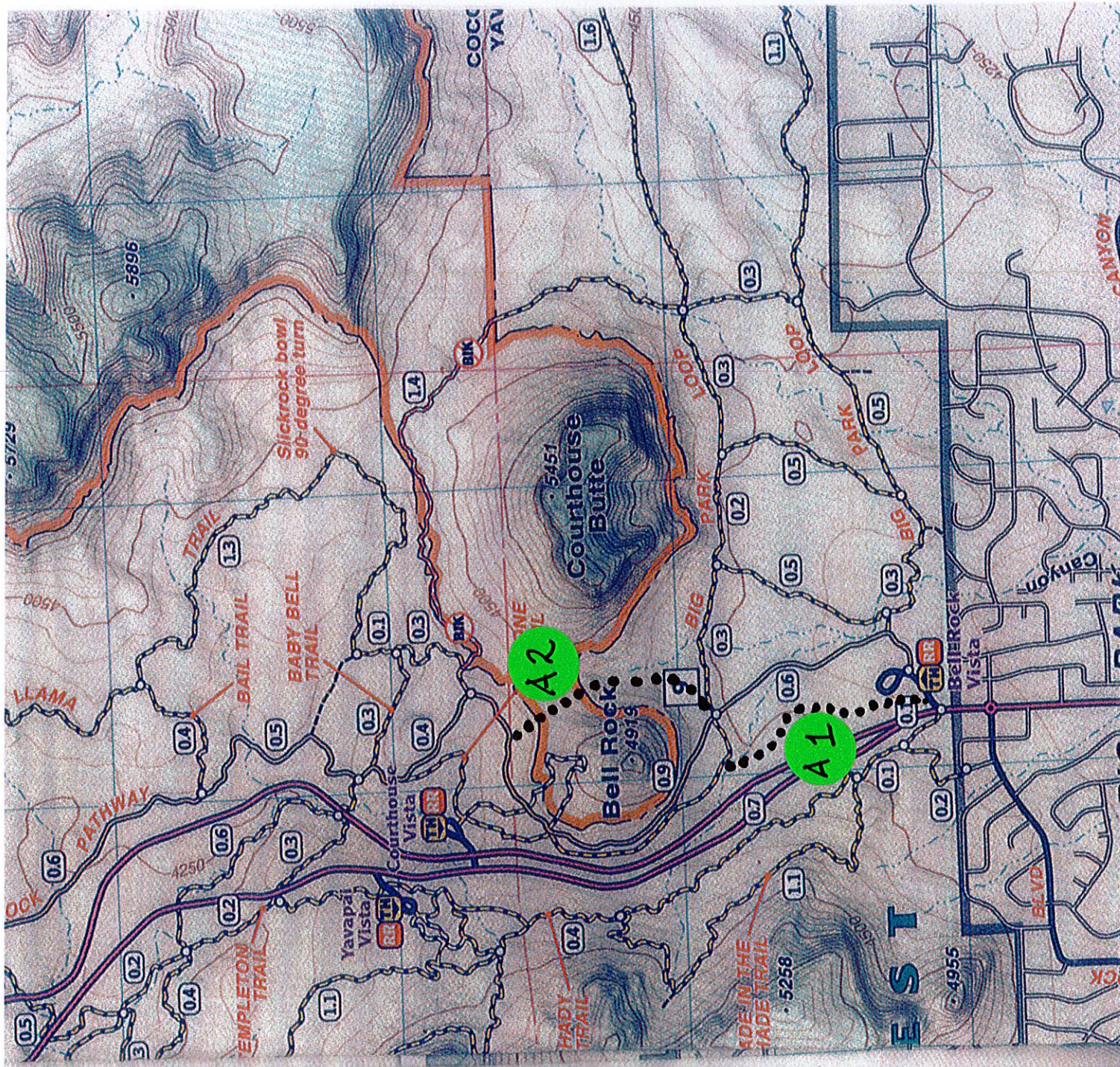
- Option 1: Create a small parking area (7 vehicles maximum) at the south end of the Mystic Trail near the current single panel kiosk. This would move parking off the road shoulder, thereby improving safety for pedestrians and enhancing the scenic quality of Chapel Road.
- Option 2: Create a trailhead on SR 179 on National Forest land, located opposite the Poco Diablo Resort and east of San Miguel Drive. This trailhead would link to the Mystic Trail and the Broken Arrow area trails. This trailhead may accommodate up to 30 vehicles. A toilet and kiosk information boards may also be provided. This would ease the parking pressure at Broken Arrow Trailhead and residential areas.

Priority: Moderate

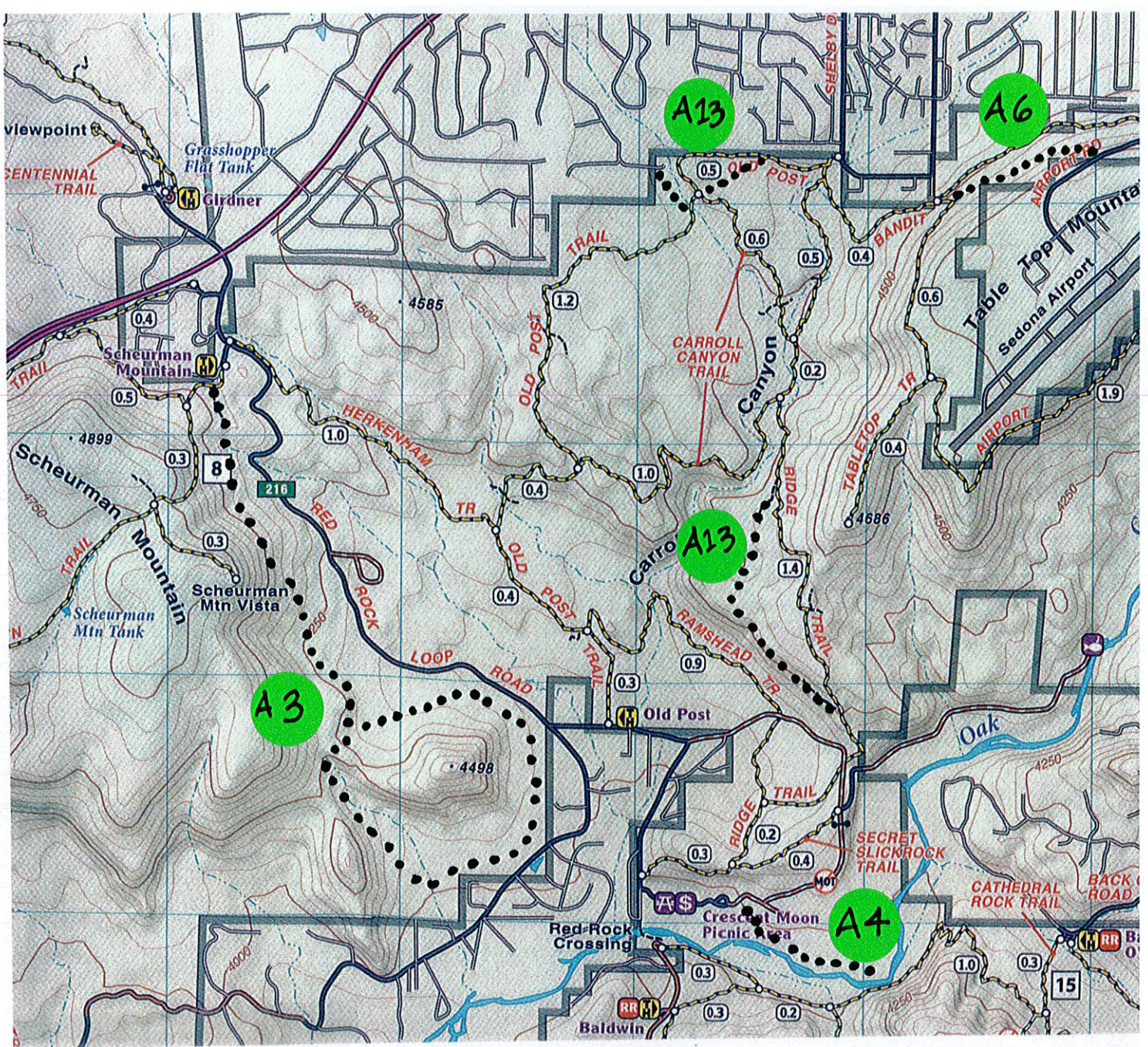
3. Trailhead Parking at Dry Beaver Creek on Cornville Road (aka the Asphalt Mixing Table)

This location on Cornville Road (CR30) at the junction of Forest Road 119 and 9203T next to Dry Beaver Creek has long served as a de facto trailhead with an equestrian emphasis. The site is on Cornville Road approximately 1.5 miles north of Interstate 17. The site would be reengineered to improve the space for horse trailer parking and circulation, while continuing to accommodate Yavapai County road maintenance activities and storage.

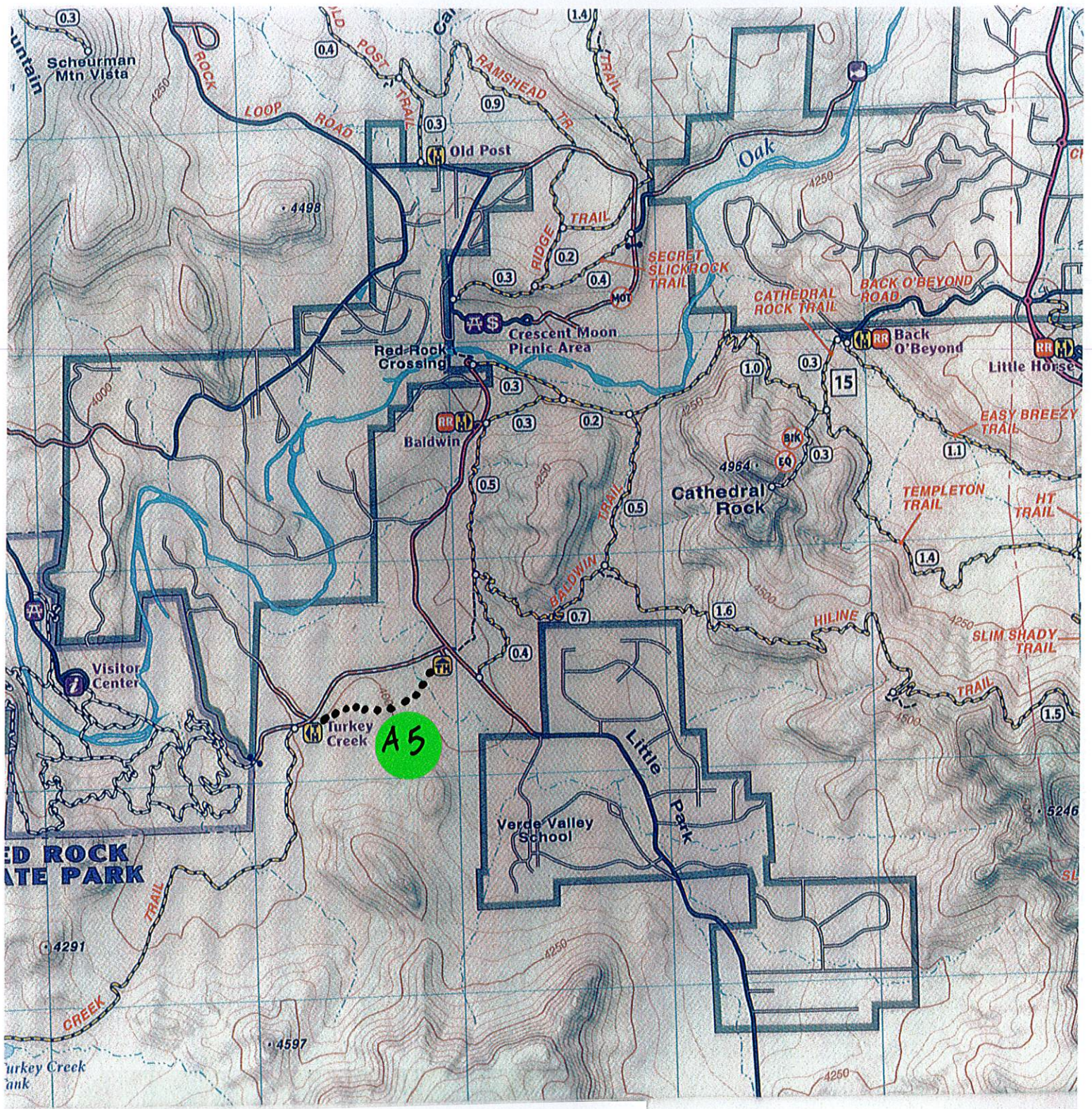
Priority: Moderate



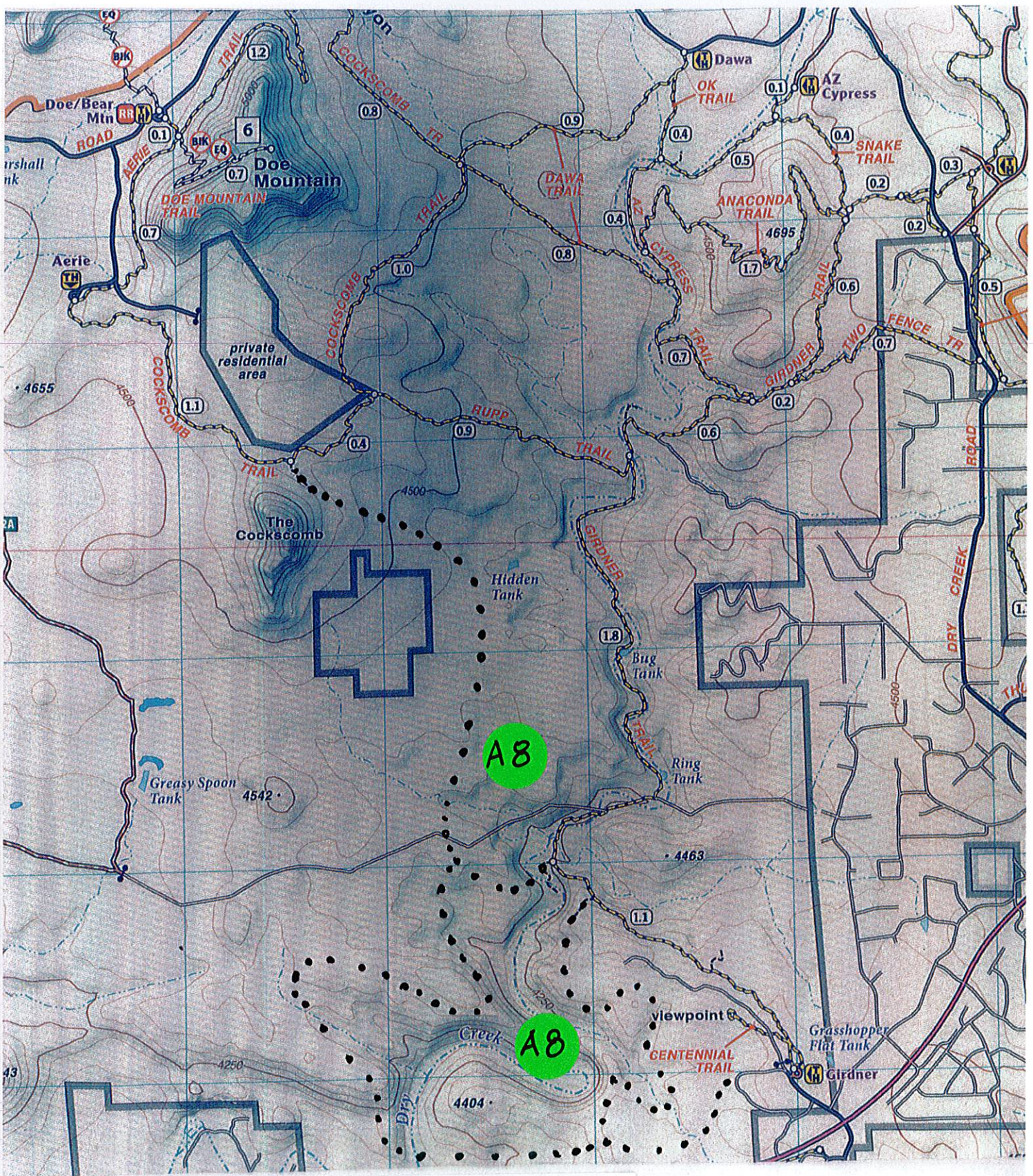
Trail map courtesy of Beartooth Publishing LLC, copyright 2013.



Trail map courtesy of Beartooth Publishing LLC, copyright 2013.

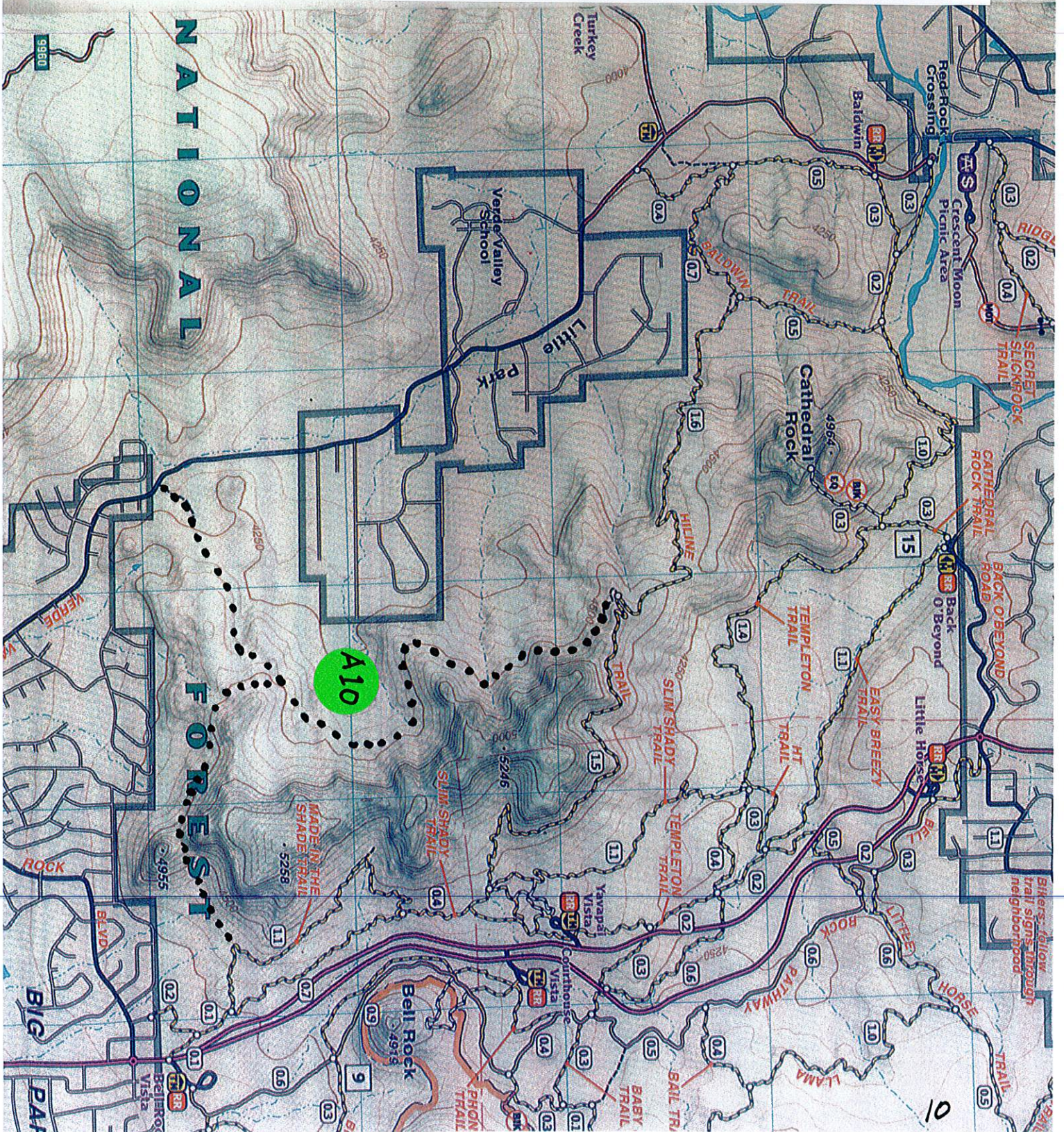


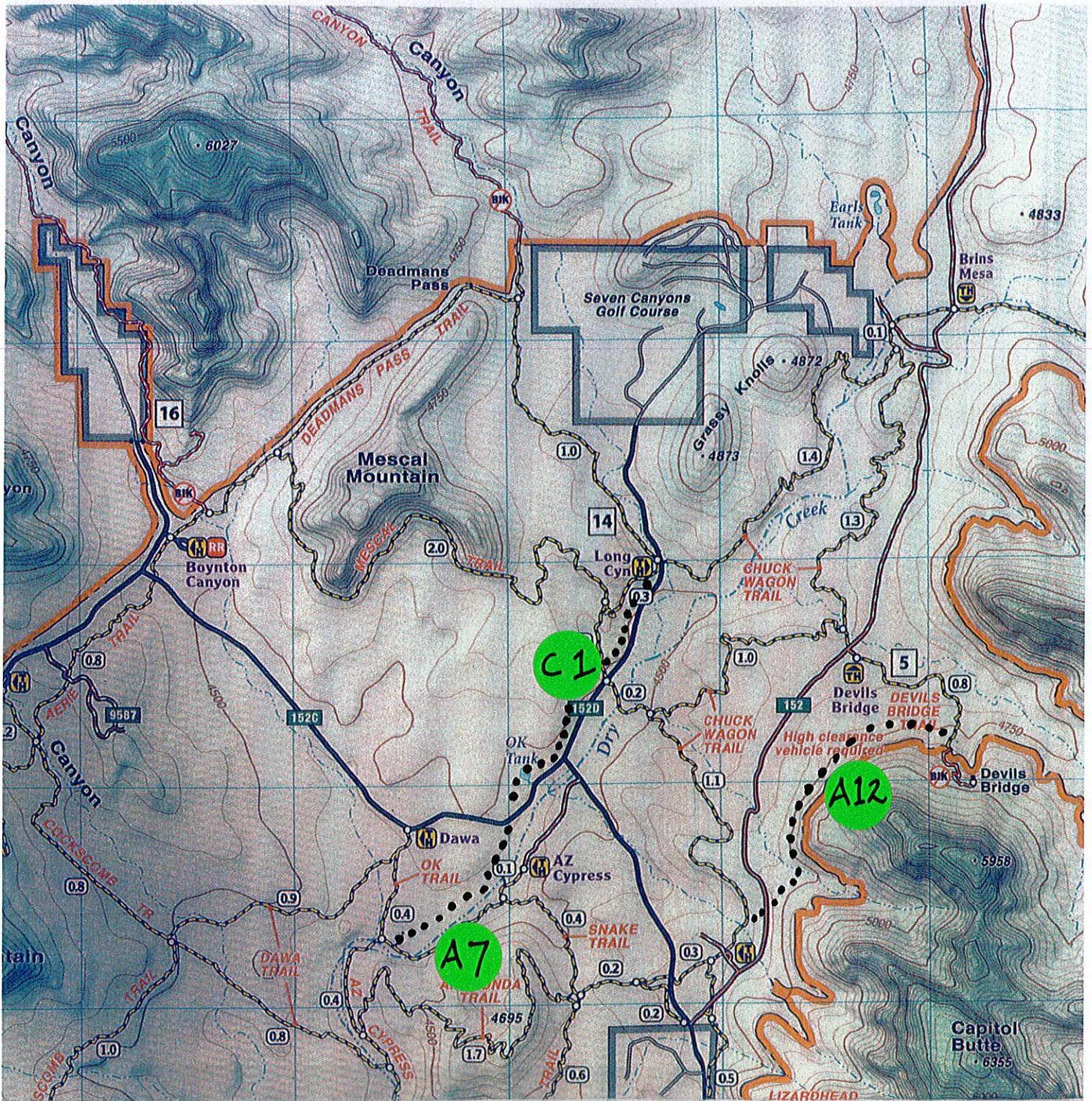
Trail map courtesy of Beartooth Publishing LLC, copyright 2013.



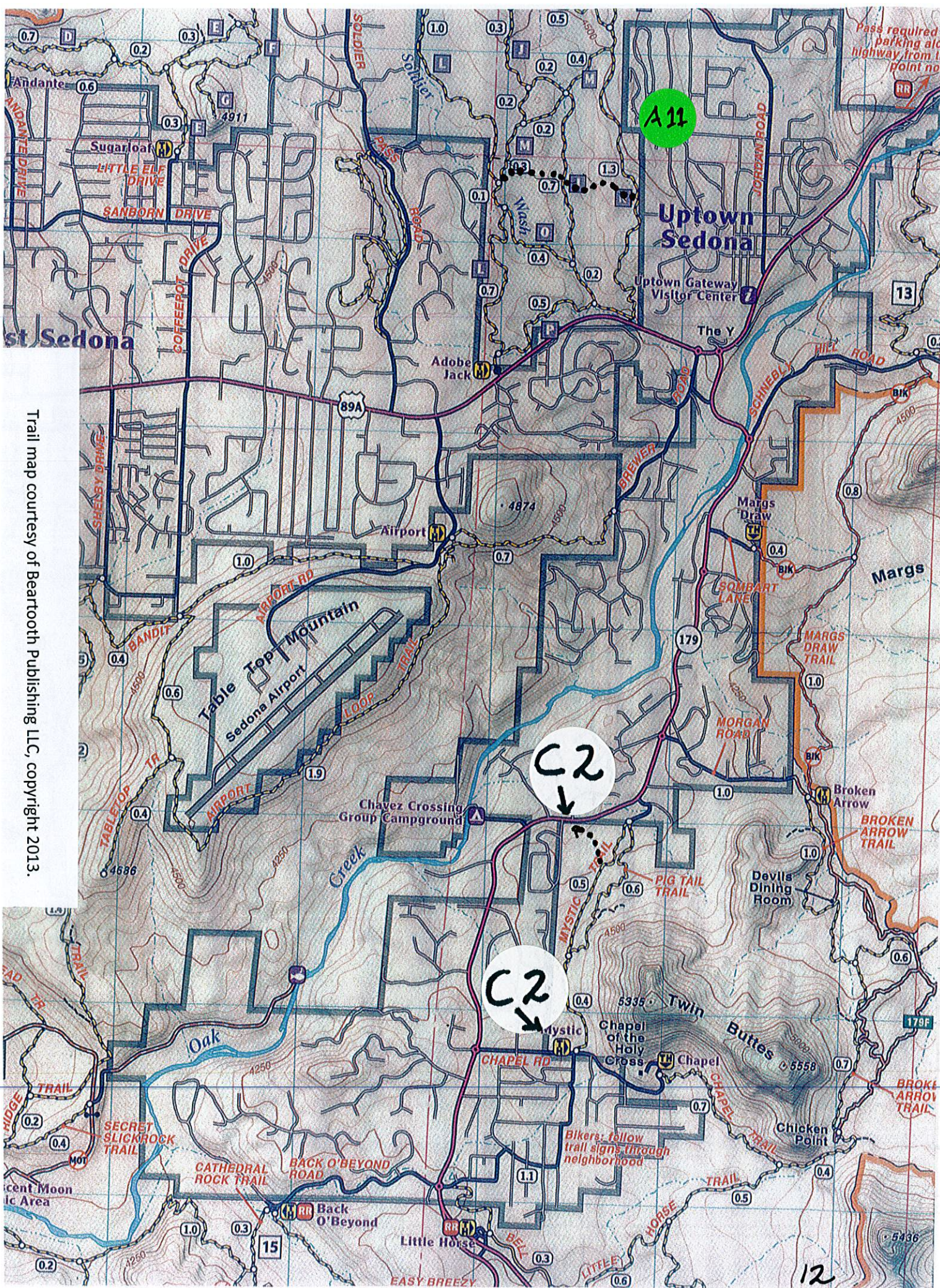
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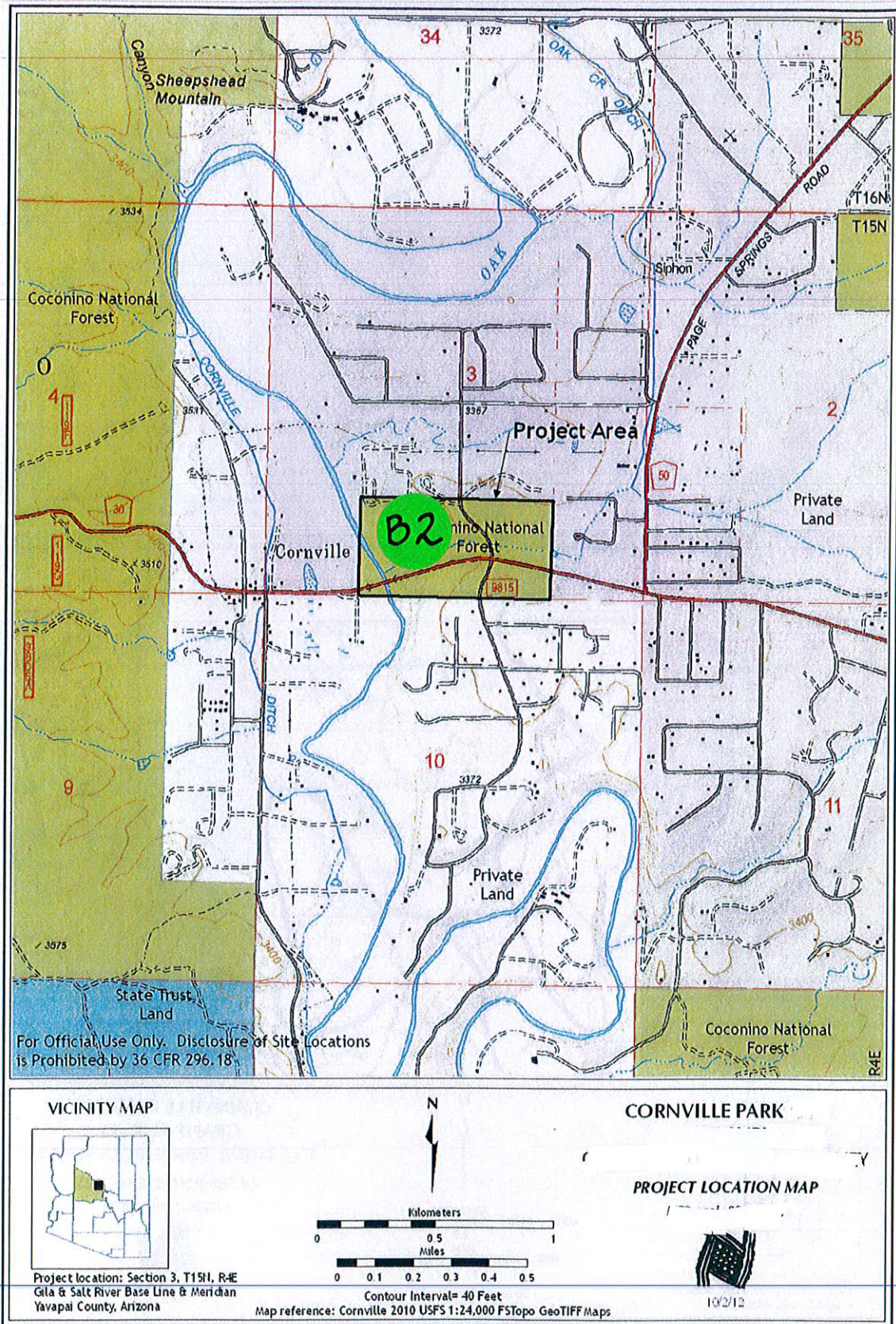


Trail map courtesy of Beartooth Publishing LLC, copyright 2013.

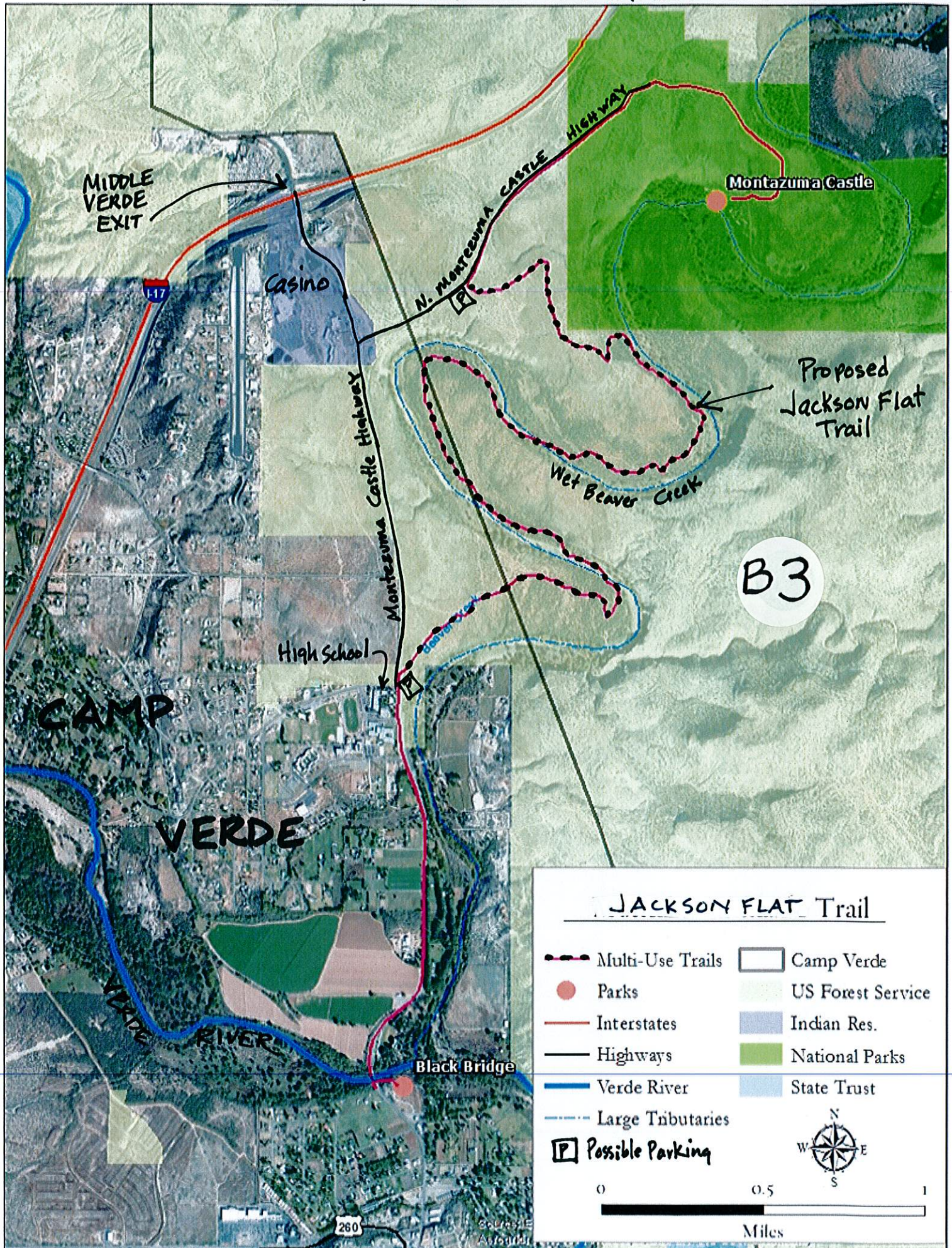
13



CORNVILLE PROPOSAL



CAMP VERDE PROPOSAL



E Cornville Rd

C3

LIVE TRAFFIC

Project Site

E Kimberleys Way

Cornville Road

N Boice Rd

to Sedona

17

293

293

E Beaver Creek Rd
McGuireville

To Camp Verde

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